

38 Akrura Meets the Residents of Vrndavana

from the Krsna Book, Chapter 38 by His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

Narrator: (this is acted out) When Akrura saw Krsna and Balarama, he immediately got down from his chariot and fell flat, just like a rod. Upon touching the lotus feet of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, he became overwhelmed with transcendental bliss, his voice choked up and he could not speak. Lord Krsna, who is very kind to his devotees, raises Akrura with his hand and embraced him. Balarama also embraced Akrura. Taking him by the hand, They brought Akrura to Their sitting room, where they offered him a very nice sitting place and water for washing his feet.

Krsna and Balarama worshiped Akrura with suitable presentations of honey and other ingredients. They offered him a cow in charity and brought very palatable foodstuffs and Akrura accepted them. When Akrura finished eating, Balarama offered him betel nuts and spices and placed pulp of sandalwood upon his forehead, just to make him more pleased and comfortable.

The Vedic system of receiving a guest was completely observed by Lord Krsna Himself to teach all others how to receive a guest at home. It is a Vedic injunction that even if a guest is an enemy, he should be received so well that he does not apprehend any danger from his host. If the host is a poor man, he should at least offer a straw mat as a sitting place and a glass of water to drink.

Krsna and Balarama welcomed Akrura in a way just befitting his exalted position as a relative and an ambassador from the king.

Nanda: My dear, gentle Uncle Akrura, was your trip here comfortable? May all good fortune be yours! Are our well-wishing friends and our relatives, both close and distant, happy and in good health?

What shall I inquire from you? As long as King Kamsa - that disease of our family, who goes by the name "maternal uncle" - is still prospering, why should I wonder about the well-being of our relatives and his other subjects? I know that you are being protected by Kamsa, who is most cruel and demoniac. His protection is just like the slaughterhouse keeper's protection of animals he will kill in the future. Kamsa is so selfish that he has killed the sons of his own sister, so how can I believe that he is protecting the citizens of Mathura? If the political or executive heads of the state are simply interested in themselves, they can never look after the welfare of the citizens.

Krsna: My dear Uncle, your presence is very welcome here. May I inquire about the welfare of My relatives and friends in Mathura? Are they all well and free from anxieties?

I am very sorry that Kamsa is the ruler of the kingdom. Kamsa is the greatest anachorism in the whole system of government and one cannot expect any welfare for the citizens while he rules.

My father, Vasudeva, has undergone much tribulation simply from My being his son. For this reason, he has lost many other sons. I think Myself so fortunate that you have come as My relative and friend.

My good friend, Akrura, by good fortune, We have today fulfilled our desire to see you. Our dear relative, O gentle Uncle, please tell Me the purpose of your coming to Vrndavana.

Narrator: Akrura explained the recent events in Mathura including Kamsa's attempt to kill Vasudeva, the father of Krsna. He related how Sirla Narada Muni had disclosed that Krsna was the son of Vasudeva, hidden by Vasudeva in the house of Nanda Maharaja. Akrura then explained his purpose in coming to Vrndavana; to take Krsna back to Mathura, where Kamsa was making plans to have Krsna killed by his many demoniac friends. After hearing of these arrangements, Krsna and Balarama, who are very expert in killing opponents, mildly laughed at the plans of Kamsa.

Nanda: I will invite all the cowherd boys to go to Mathura to participate in the Dhanur-yagna festival. They should collect all kinds of milk preparations and milk to present in the ceremony. We will leave early tomorrow morning!

1st Gopi: Brahma, you are very cruel! In the beginning, we appreciated your workmanship in giving us these eyes to see the beautiful face of Krsna, but now, just like a foolish creature, You are trying to take out our eyes (by crying) so we may not see Krsna here again.

Krsna, the son of Maharaja Nanda, is also very cruel! He must always have new friends; He does not like to keep friendship for a long time with anyone!

We gopis of Vrndavana, having left our homes, friends and relatives, have become Krsna's maidservants, but He is neglecting us and going away! He does not even look upon us, although we are completely surrendered to Him!

2nd Gopi: Now all the girls of Mathura will have the opportunity to serve Krsna's lotus feet. They are expecting Krsna's arrival, and they will enjoy His sweet smiling face and will drink its honey. Although we know that

Krsna is very steady and determined, we are threatened that as soon as He sees the beautiful faces of the young girls in Mathura, He will forget Himself. We fear he will become controlled by them and forget us, for we are simple village girls. He will no longer be kind to us. We therefore do not expect Krsna to return to Vrndavana. He will not be able to leave the company of the girls in Mathura.

Narrator: The gopis began to imagine the great functions in the city of Mathura. Krsna would pass through the streets of Mathura and the ladies and young girls of the city would see Him from the balconies of their respective homes.

3rd Gopi: The most astonishing fact is that Krsna, the son of Nanda Maharaja, without consideration, has already seated Himself on the chariot!! From this, it appears that Krsna is not very intelligent. Yet, He may be very intelligent - but He is not very civilized!

Not only Krsna, but all the cowherd men are so callous that they are already yoking the bulls and calves for the journey to Mathura! The elderly persons in Vrndavana are also merciless; they do not take our plight into consideration and stop Krsna's journey to Mathura! Even the demigods are very unkind to us; They are not impeding His going to Mathura!

4th Gopi: Despite our elderly parents and guardians, we shall personally stop Krsna from going to Mathura! Let us directly approach Krsna and stop Him from going. We have no alternative than to take this direct action. Everyone has gone against us to take away Krsna from our sight.

3rd Gopi: Let us go right up to Krsna and pull at His clothes and hands and insist that He get down from the chariot and stay here with us! We will tell Him, "Don't bring upon Yourself the sinful reaction for murdering so many women."

2nd Gopi: But, if we do that, our relatives and the village elders will discover our secret love for Krsna and abandon us!

1st Gopi: But, what can they do about it?

2nd Gopi: Yes, our lives are already wretched now that Krsna is leaving! We have nothing to lose. Without Him, we cannot live for a moment.

3rd Gopi: That's right. We will remain in the Vrndavana forest just like presiding goddesses, and then we can fulfill our true desire - to stay with Krsna in the forest!

4th Gopi: Yes, and even if the elders and our relatives punish us by beating us or locking us up, we can still live happily with the knowledge that Krsna is residing in our village. Some of our girlfriends will cleverly find a way to bring us the remnants of Krsna's food, and then we can remain alive! But, if Krsna is not prevented from leaving, we will certainly die!!

5th Gopi: We have passed a very long night - which seemed only a moment - engaged in the rasa dance with Krsna. We were looking at His sweet smile, and were embracing and talking. Now, how shall we live for even a moment if He goes away from us?

At the end of the day, in the evening, along with His elder brother, Balarama, Krsna would return home with His friends. His face would be smeared with the dust raised by the hooves of cows, and He would smile and play on His flute and look upon us so kindly. How shall we be able to forget Him? How shall we be able to forget Krsna who is our life and soul? He has already taken away our hearts in so many ways throughout our days and nights, and if He goes away, there is no possibility of our continuing to live.

(The gopis begin to cry.)

1st Gopi: O dear Damodar!

2nd Gopi: Dear Madhava!

3rd Gopi: O Govinda!

(Fade to black. Bhajans)